



## What Is To Be Done?

The attached and downloadable document linked below is made up of extracts from Lenin's "[What Is To Be Done?](#)"

In this book Lenin was concerned to oppose what he called "economism", which is also called "syndicalism" and in South Africa in the past and still up to now, called "workerism".

Lenin was concerned to show, following the publication of Eduard Bernstein's gradualist, reformist "[Evolutionary Socialism](#)" of 1899, and Rosa Luxemburg's "[Reform or Revolution?](#)" published in 1900, that a revolutionary transformation of society was not possible without a revolutionary political party of the working class.

In a [Preface](#) to the book, Lenin explained that various internal political matters within the Russian Social-Democratic and Labour Party (RSDLP) had caused him to hold the book back; if the outcome of these inner-party struggles had been different, then the book would have been written

differently, Lenin wrote.

In [Chapter 1](#), it is clear that the initial thrust of Lenin's polemic is directed against Eduard Bernstein, just as Rosa Luxemburg's was, in 1900.

Trade union organisation of the working class was never going to be sufficient for revolution. Lenin showed that the workers' vanguard political party, the communist party, remains a "must-have".

"What Is To Be Done?" is the book where Lenin most clearly differentiated the reformist mass organisations from the vanguard political party of the working class, the communist party. The attached and downloadable file contains the passages that are most directly relevant to this point.

"What Is To Be Done?" is for this reason regarded as the generative blueprint for the Communist Parties as we know them, and of the form that they took after the October, 1917 revolution in Russia and in particular following the formation of the Comintern in 1919.

The SACP is one such Party, formed in 1921 under the Comintern's rules and at the same time admitted to membership of that organisation, as it remained until the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943.

The blueprint is most precisely seen in Part C, "Organisation of Workers and Organisation of Revolutionaries", which is included in the linked document.

Lenin concludes: *"...our task is not to champion the degrading of the revolutionary to the level of an amateur, but to raise the amateurs to the level of revolutionaries."*

Next in this part, we will look at Lenin's report of the Second Congress of the RSDLP.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [What Is To Be Done?, Parts B and C, Lenin, 1902](#).
- To download any of the CU courses in PDF files [please click here](#).